(d) the quantum of funds made available to the Bank by way of paid up capital and loans so far; and

(e) the achievement and activities undertaken by the Bank till date?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) Yes, Sir. The organisation is named as North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Limited (NEDFI).

(b) The role and objective of NEDFI is to carry on the business of providing credit and other facilities for promotion, expansion and modernisation of industrial enterprises and infrastructure projects in the North Eastern Region of the country.

(c) The operations of NEDFI are focused exclusively on the North Eastern Region and cover the entire spectrum of industry i.e. small, medium and large scale industries.

(d) The authorised capital of NEDFI is Rs.500 crores. Its paid up capital at present is Rs.90 crores.

(e) NEDFI has reported that during March - July, 1996 it has conducted eight seminars/workshops for entrepreneurs in all the seven States of the North Eastern Region. A list of 62 items identified by the consultants as feasible in the North Eastern Region prepared pre-investment studies on most of the identified items and offered them to eligible entrepreneurs to help them take investment decisions. As a result of the promotional efforts of NEDFI, it has received about 30 enquiries involving investment of about Rs.70 crores. NEDFI has sanctioned direct assistance of Rs.12 crores oil sector, and catalysed an investment of Rs.30 crores. NEDFI also helped in marketing an initial public issue offer of equity capital of around Rs.200 crores for a local company.

Drinking Water in Coalmines

2659. SHRI HARADHAN ROY : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Eastern Coalfields Limited have made arrangements for the supply of potable water in its coalmines and quarters of the workers;

(b) if so, names of the coalmines and workers quarters to whom this facility is likely to be extended; and

(c) if not the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) ECL have made arrangement for supply of potable water to 43049 Standard Quarters. The rest are being supplied potable water through Community Taps/ Hand Pumps/Tubewells/Dugwells etc. The present percentage of satisfaction is 91.03%.

(c) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Japanese Investment in Joint Ventures

2660. SHRI JAI PRAKASH AGARWAL : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the industries in the country wherein investment has been made by Japan during each of the last three years;

(b) whether Japan has also set up some joint ventures during the above period;

(c) if so, the details of such joint ventures set up in India during the above period;

(d) the amount of capital invested by Japan in these joint ventures separately;

(e) whether Japan proposes to make investments in some more joint ventures in India during the current financial year also; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) to (d). Proposals of foreign direct investment approved during each of the last three years with Japanese firms are as under :

Year	FDI Proposals approved	Amount of FDI
1993	26	257.43
1994	45	400.90
1995	40	1414.26

The details of such proposals viz. name of the Indian company, name and country of foreign collaborator, equity investment involved, item of manufacture/activity are published by the Indian Investment Centre as a supplement to the Monthly Newsletter and copies of these are regularly supplied to the Parliament Library.

(e) and (f). The approvals to joint venture proposals are accorded on receipt of application from the entrepreneurs. Each proposals is considered on its merits and as per prescribed guidelines in this regard.

[English]

Banking Support for Tea Gardens of West Bengal

2661. SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the Tea Gardens of West Bengal are suffering for lack of Banking support in so far as their expansion and modernisation plan is concerned; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to remedy the situation?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b). Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reported that they have received a representation from Tea Association of India stating, inter-alia, that banks have lost interest in financing schemes for development of tea plantation on account of stoppage of refinance from National Bank for Agriculture & Rural Development (NABARD) with effect from January, 1996.

NABARD, has, reported that considering the representations received from various quarters, it has decided to allocate Rs. 2.5 crores for sanction of new tea schemes in West Bengal, during 1996-1997. Further, the refinance requirements of small tea growers financed by State Cooperative Bank, State Co-operative Agriculture and Rural Development Bank and Regional Rural Banks of West Bengal will be met by NABARD in full.

Excise Duty on Railway Wagons

2662. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any request has been received from the Railway Ministry to waive the Central excise duty for private investors opting for the "own your wagon scheme";

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereon;

(c) whether the Railways, the main buyers of the wagons, do not pay central excise; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) No request has been received from the Railway Ministry, in the recent past, to waive the Central excise duty for private investors opting for the "own your wagon scheme".

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) and (d). Indian Railways do not pay Central excise duty on wagons-bought, owned and intended to be used by them. The exemption has been given taking into account the public interest sub-served by the Railways.

[Translation]

Special Fund for Tribal Women

2663. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Non-Governmental Organisations in meeting with the Minister of Finance had requested to set up a special fund for Tribal Women and NGOs engaged in development and plantation works; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The relevant suggestions/deliberations made in the pre-budget meeting are carefully considered for the budgetary exercise.

[English]

Home Page to Indian Custom

2664. SHRI RAM NAIK : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that a home page for Indian Customs has been created in the Internal System;

(b) if so, whether as a result of above facility, a person residing abroad can tip off custom officials here about smuggling activities in India; and

(c) if so, the action taken/proposed to counter the above activities?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (c). Yes, Sir. A home page has been created on the Internet giving, inter-alia, information regarding rules for giving rewards to persons who provide specific information about smuggling and duty evasion.

There already exist adequate legal and administrative arrangements to counter smuggling activities in India and they include provisions in law for confiscation of goods, imposition of fines and penalties and for prosecution of the concerned persons.

Foreign Investment

2665. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the developed nations and the World Bank/IMF have been insisting on further liberalisation of duties and lowering of interest rates for ensuring free flow of foreign investment in India and globalisation of economy;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to resist such pressures for preventing extinction of domestic industries; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to ensure that sudden cessation of activities or work by foreign companies in the infrastructure sector does not bring the country's development to a grinding halt?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b). Though developed countries and the world Bank/IMF do make suggestions about the macro-economic approach that India needs to pursue, there is no question of any external pressure determining the